Indo-China relations

753. SHRI SANJAY NIRUPAM: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether China backs India for Security Council seat;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the two countries preparing for their first ever strategic dialogue while a free trade agreement is worked out; and

(d) if so, the details about the dialogue?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) and (b) During his recent visit to India in October 2004, China's State Councillor Mr. Tang Jiaxuan noted that China supports a bigger role for India in the international community, including in the United Nations Security Council. The Chinese side has also conveyed that priority should be given to enhancing the representation of developing countries as part of the reform of the UN Security Council.

(c) and (d) Government has accepted a proposal from the Chinese side to hold Strategic Dialogue at the level of Foreign Secretary/Vice Foreign Minister. The first meeting will be held on a mutually convenient date.

The Joint Study Group set up by the two sides to examine the potential complementarities for bilateral trade and economic cooperation, is also exploring the feasibility of establishing Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement between India and China.

Prime Minister's Bangkok visit

754. SHRI KALRAJ MISHRA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Prime Minister visited Bangkok recently to attend the BIMSTEC (Bangladesh, India, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Thailand Economic Cooperation) first Summit meet;